

REMARKS

The Examiner's Action mailed on February 21, 2007, has been received and its contents carefully considered. A Request for Continued Examination is submitted herewith.

In this Amendment, Applicant has cancelled claim 1 without prejudice, amended claims 2, 11, 14, 15, 19, 20, 22-24 and 26, and added new claim 29. Claims 27, 28 and 29 are the independent claims, and claims 2-17, 19-24 and 26-29 are pending in the application. For at least the following reasons, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for allowing claims 27 and 28.

Claims 11 and 24 were objected to for lack of antecedent basis and have been amended accordingly. It is therefore respectfully requested that these objections be withdrawn.

Claims 1-3, 6, 13, 15 and 22 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over the combination of *Ohzawa* (US 6,965,663 B2) with *Raatikainen* (US 5,721,759), claims 1-3, 15, 19-20 and 23 over *Kumakhov '008* (US 5,497,008) in view of *Raatikainen*, claims 4 and 5 as obvious over the combination of *Ohzawa*, *Raatikainen* and *Kumakhov '869* (US 5,192,869), and in the alternative as obvious over the combination of *Kumakhov '008*, *Raatikainen* and *Kumakhov '869*, claim 6 over both the *Kumakhov '869* and '008 references combined with *Raatikainen*, claims 7, 9, 10 and 12 as obvious over *Ohzawa*, *Raatikainen* and *Hendee et al.* (US 2,837,656), claim 8 over *Ohzawa*, *Raatikainen*, *Kumakhov '869* and *Hendee*

et al., claims 7, 10, 12 and 13 over *Kumakhov '008, Raatikainen and Hendee et al.*, claims 11 and 22 over *Kumakhov '008, Raatikainen and Hossain et al. '039* (US 5,778,039), claim 14 over *Ohzawa, Raatikainen and Nakahara et al.* (US 5,305,366), and in the alternative over *Kumakhov '008, Raatikainen and Nakahara et al.*, claim 16 over *Ohzawa, Raatikainen and Kojima et al.* (US 2001/0021240 A1), and in the alternative over *Kumakhov '008, Raatikainen and Kojima et al.*, claim 17 over *Ohzawa, Raatikainen, Kojima et al.* and *Kissinger* (US 3,327,584), and in the alternative over *Kumakhov '008, Raatikainen, Kojima et al.* and *Kissinger*, claim 21 over *Kumakhov '008, Raatikainen and Hossain et al. '620* (US 5,754,620), claim 24 over *Kumakhov '008, Raatikainen, Hossain et al. '039* and *Miersch et al.* (DD 291420 A5), and claim 26 over *Kumakhov '008, Raatikainen and Webster* (US 2,763,784). These rejections are each respectfully moot in light of the amendments.

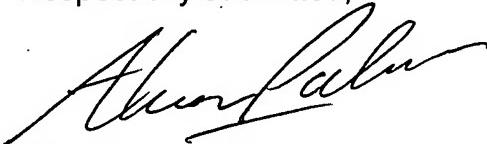
Claims 27 and 28 stand allowed, and newly added claim 29 is also believed to be allowable, as it differs from claim 27 only in omitting "wherein the at least one hollow tube comprises a plurality of hollow tubes and at least one of the plurality of hollow tubes is connected to a helium source and is flushed with helium", which is not believed to be necessary to patentably distinguish over the art of record. Claims 2-10, 12 and 13 depend directly or indirectly from claim 28, and claims 11, 14-17, 19-24 and 26 depend directly or indirectly from claim 29, and are therefore also allowable.

It is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Such action and the passing of this case to issue are requested.

Should the Examiner feel that a conference would help to expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned counsel to arrange for such an interview.

Should the remittance be accidentally missing or insufficient, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 18-0002, and advise us accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,



May 17, 2007
Date

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